

REMARKS

Claims 10-18 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, the specification and claims 10 and 15-17 are currently amended, new claims 19-23 have been added, and claims 11-14 and 18 remain unchanged. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The claims stand rejected under the cited prior art of record. Specifically, claims 10-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Dinh (U.S. Patent No. 5,343,632) in view of France '322 (France 2 491 322) and Moratalla (U.S. Patent No. 5,732,562).

Independent Claims

Independent claim 10 recites a dishwasher having a washing basket and a conduit system connected to the washing basket in an air-guiding manner such that air is guided from the washing basket to the conduit system and air is guided from the conduit system to the washing basket. As recited in claim 10, the conduit system includes a cold side portion and a hot side portion and at least one heat tube having a pair of ends. One of the ends of the heat tube extends into the cold side portion of the conduit system, and the other end of the heat tube extends into the hot side portion of the conduit system. As further recited in claim 10, the conduit system is operable to guide air from the washing basket through the cold side portion, whereupon the one end of the heat tube promotes a cooling of air in the cold side portion of the conduit system with a resultant condensing of moisture out of the cooled air, to thereafter guide cooled air from the cold side portion to the hot side portion, whereupon the other end of the heat tube promotes heating of the air in the hot side portion of the conduit system. Thereafter, the conduit system guides the heated air from the hot side portion to the washing basket. The heat tube operates to conduct heat from its one end extending into the cold portion of the conduit system to its other end extending into the hot portion of the conduit system with the one end of the heat tube receiving heat from air guided therepast at the cold side portion of the conduit system and conducting such received heat to its other end.

Independent claim 19 recites similar subject matter and specifies that the conduit system connected to the washing basket is in a closed air system such that air is guided from the washing basket to the conduit system and air is guided from the conduit system to the washing basket without outside air input.

Objection to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings as not showing the claimed “washing basket.” The claimed washing basket, however, is equivalent to the washing container described in the specification. For clarity, the specification has been amended to reference washing container/basket 2. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claims 10-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The phrase “the washing container” has been amended to reference --the washing basket--. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Rejection over Prior Art

The Dinh patent describes a dryer with a closed system that continuously recycles air used to dry materials in the drying compartment without discharging the drying air to the atmosphere. The Dinh system includes a regenerative heat exchanger and an atmospheric cooler/condenser that serve to remove moisture from saturated air drawn from the drying compartment and transfer the heat of condensation back into the air before the air is reheated and recycled back to the materials in the drying compartment. The Office Action recognizes that the conduit system in Dinh lacks the claimed heat tube component of the conduit system.

In this context, however, the Office Action contends that Moratalla discloses “that it is old and well known in a dehumidification system, to provide a heat pipe/tube (185) having a pair of ends, one of the ends (190) of the heat pipe/tube extending into the cold side portion of a conduit system (170) to promote cooling and the other end (255) of the heat pipe/tube extending into the hot side portion of the conduit system to promote heating (255)” Applicants respectfully disagree with this characterization of the Moratalla patent.

Moratalla describes a system for conditioning air using blowers, conduits, a condenser and a heater for generating and regenerating dry air. As shown in Fig. 3, the system includes a heat exchanger 185, which Moratalla describes as “heat pipes, plate-to-plate, rotary heat exchangers, and the like.” Contrary to the contentions in the Office Action, however, even if the heat exchanger 185 is comprised of a heat pipe, Moratalla does not disclose that ends of the heat exchanger respectively extend into a cold side portion of a conduit system and a hot side portion of a conduit system. Rather, the heat exchanger 185 is merely disposed in the conduit path across which the air is passed.

Moreover, although Moratalla references a pre-cooling section 190 of the heat exchanger 185 and a reheated section 255 of the heat exchanger 185, nowhere does Moratalla describe that the heat exchanger 185 is operable to conduct heat from the pre-cooling section 190 to the reheated section 255. Rather, Moratalla utilizes a fluid cooler device 205 adjacent the pre-cooling section 190 of the heat exchanger 185 and a fluid heating device 270 adjacent the reheated section 255 of the heat exchanger 185. Since at least this subject matter is lacking in Moratalla, Applicants submit that for this reason also, the rejection is misplaced.

With regard to the dependent claims, Applicants submit that these claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on an allowable independent claim and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 19-23 have been added. Claim 19 defines a dishwasher including a washing basket and a conduit system connected to the washing basket in a closed air system such that air is guided from the washing basket to the conduit system and air is guided from the conduit system to the washing basket **without outside air input**. As described in the specification, with the closed air system, any exchange of contaminated air from the surroundings is completely eliminated, preventing any back contamination of the items to be treated. See page 7, lines 5-7. The system described in Dinh “as proposedly modified” by the Moratalla structure is not a closed air system but rather requires external air (see, for example, air intake 105, 110 in Moratalla via intake blower 125). Claims 20-23 define additional features of the

invention, and Applicants submit that these claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on an allowable independent claim and because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 10-23 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,

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